

Classification, Assessment and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: An Example of Protocol-Supported Nurse Documentation

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The goal of this hypercard program is to demonstrate how computer applications can support the nurse in making clinical decisions. Specifically, this program supports the nurse in making decisions about the classification and treatment of pressure ulcers based on hospital protocol. The program incorporates aspects of the pressure ulcer prevention and treatment protocol currently under development at LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City. In addition, this program incorporates numerous ideas and suggestions from nursing informatics literature into a possible graphical user interface which could be used across nursing applications.

***Features:** The program is designed to accommodate both the novice and expert nurse. It assists the novice nurse in ulcer classification by leading the nurse through a decision tree and providing scanned*

images, cross-section views and textual descriptions of the various ulcer classifications. The expert nurse does not need to go through the decision tree. After classification, both the expert and novice nurses are led through the screens necessary to document ulcer size and base, edge and drainage color. Finally, the nurse is led to the ulcer treatment screen which is specific to the ulcer classification (based on protocol). In addition to these features, the nurse has on-line access to hospital assessment policy, the decision tree for ulcer classification and treatments, the pressure ulcer treatment protocol, and a list of references used in the protocol development. These features, plus an interactive overview or "stack map" are available to the nurse as icons located on a control panel on every screen.